

One Nation, and One King.

Ezekiel Chap. XXXVII. Ver. 22.

# DISCOURSE

Ezek. Chap. XXXVII. Ver. 22.

Occasion'd by the HAPPY

# UNION

England and Scotland,

Which Commenc'd on May the 1<sup>st</sup> 1707.

By John Edwards, D.D.

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~~Proprietary~~ Ezekiel, Chap. XXXVII. Vers. 22:

*And I will make them One Nation in the Land, upon the Mountains of Israel, and One King shall be King to them all: And they shall be no more two Nations; neither shall they be divided into two Kingdoms any more at all.*

**I**t is agreed upon by Expositors, that this and the like Texts refer to the Agreement and Union of the Jewish Tribes, after their return from their Captivity in Babylon, and other Foreign Countries. But it is likewise granted, that these Words are ultimately meant of the Kingdom of the Messiah, when the Faithful shall be united together in one Body, The Church. This is foretold in *Isaiah xi. 13.* *The Envy of Ephraim, and the Adversaries of Judah shall be cut off. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.* All their Emulations and Strifes shall cease, when they are incorporated into one Society in Christ's Kingdom. And again, in *Jer. iii. 18.* *In those days (the Days of the Messiah) the House of Judah shall联合with the House of Israel;* that is, they shall walk friendly together; they shall have familiar Commerce with one another, and be join'd together in perfect Amity. The best Interpreters have own'd, that by those Terms which express the Jewish church, is frequently meant the Christian only in the Prophetic Writings; and so here *Israel* and *Judah* denote the Church of Christ under the Gospel; and the Condition of it in those Times, when all Enmity and Hatred shall vanish, and Peace and Unity shall succeed in their room. In this is the highest meaning of the Words which are now before us, is evident from what we read in the 24<sup>th</sup> Verse of this Chapter, *David my Servant shall be King over them.* And again, Ver. 25. *My servant David shall be their Prince for ever;* which can be meant of none but Jesus Christ, the Son of David. This makes it inconceivably plain and manifest, that the Words of the Text are to be understood of the State of the Church hidden in Christian Dispensation, but especially when it arrives to its utmost Growth and Maturity, and is receiving its finishing Stroke: Then it is that *Israel and Judah shall be no more two Nations; neither shall they be divided into two Kingdoms any more, but they shall be made One Nation, and one King shall be King to them all.*

I shall then first briefly take notice in general of this Happy Union and Concord, which is here foretold to be the Blessing of the Christian Church in the last Times of the Gospel; and then I will largely insist upon the particular Instance and Example of it, which we now Commemorate, namely, the Happy Coalition and Conjunction of England and Scotland.

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As to the First, the Catholick and general Union of all Nations gather'd into one Church under Christ; we are inform'd from the Holy Scripture, that this is an inseparable part of that Prosperous and Flourishing State of the Christian Church, which shall be before the End of the World. This Last and Glorious Scene of Christianity, is meant by the new Heavens and the new Earth, 2 Pet. iii. 13. Rev. xxi. 1. and by the binding of Satan a thousand Years, and the Saints living and reigning with Christ a thousand years, which are foretold in the xxth Chapter of the Revelation. This Height and Perfection of the Evangelical Dispensation, comprehends in it the Down-fall of the *Mystical Babylon*, or the Papal Power of *Rome*, with all its Corrupt Doctrines, Superstitions, and Idolatrous Worship, and Tyrannical Practices; the Destruction of the *Mahometan Dominion*, Falshoods and Impostures; the Conversion of the *Gentiles* and *Jews*; the introducing of Universal Righteousness; the Ceſſation of all Wars and Hostilities; and lastly, the actual arrival of *Peace* and *Unity* over the Face of the whole World. Of all which, I have amply treated in another \* place, and have proved that there must be a real Accomplishment of them in due time; but the Last of these being that which is particularly mention'd in the Text, I will confirm your Belief of it, by producing these direct Prophesies concerning it. It is part of the Description of the Coming of the *Meffiah*, That they shall then beat their Swords into Plow-shares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks. *Nation* shall not lift up *Sword* against *Nation*, neither shall they learn War any more. Isa. ii. 4. Which the *Jews* themselves understand, at least in their post-exilic Sense of the Words, concerning the Times of the *Meffiah*; and more fully this Peaceable Kingdom of Christ is foretold in the XIIth Chapter of this Prophete of Isa. 6, 7, 8 Verses. The *Wolf* shall dwell with the *Lamb*, and the *Leopard* shall lie down with the *Kid*: and the *Calf* and the young *Lion*, and the *fatling* together; and a little Child shall lead them. And the *Cow* and *Bear* shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together; and the *Lion* shall eat grass like the *Ox*; and the sucking Child shall play on the hole of the *Ape*; and the weaned Child shall put his hand in the *Cockatrice Den*; where it shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy Mountain. And further, in Chap. xxxii. ver. 17. The Work of Righteousness shall be Peace, and the effect of Righteousness Quietnes and Assurance for ever; and my People shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places. So it is foretold in Psal. lxxii. 7. That in his (that is, the *Meffiah's*) days there shall be abundance of *Peace*, so long as the Moon endures. And there are sundry other Passages to the same purpose in Holy Writ, the full and ultimate meaning of which must needs have reference to the concluding Period of the Evangelical Economy, because they were never yet fully ac-

\* Survey of all the Dispensations of Religion, Vol. II. Chap. 20, 21.

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complish'd. Therefore we may certainly infer thence, that in the utmost extent of them, they are to be understood of that Happy State which I am speaking of, when all Nations shall become the Kingdom of Christ. We of this Age have seen Variety of Revolutions and Changes, but we may expect more and more Surprizing. For the World is in a mighty Ferment, and is restless, and rowling towards its last Period. We may look for great and wonderful things, for Christianity will not go off thus, that is, as it is now in its present State. The Church must be enlarg'd, and the Flock of Christ increas'd, and all Acts of Hostility and Enmity shall cease, and the whole World shall be of one Judgment and Practice, and with one Heart, and with one Lip adore the Blessed Jesus, and chearfully submit to his Righteous Laws; they shall all be touch'd with the same Magnetism of Love, and point the same way, and turn to the same Coast.

But from this general Consideration, I am next to proceed to the particular Example which is before us, and which is the Occasion of the present Solemnity; namely, the welcome UNION of this Nation with that Neighbouring one of Scotland. They may now truly be said, according to the Words of the Text, *To be no more two Nations, nor divided into two Kingdoms any more at all; but they are made one Nation*: Which is a brief Character of the perfect Union of Both. The particulars of which, I offer in these following Heads :

I. We are United in the same Common Religion, That of Christianity in opposition to Judaism, Paganism, and that Wild Sect which had its rise from the Arabian Impostor. There is that peculiar Excellency in the Christian Religion, which is not to be found in any other. It contains in it not only all the Laws of Nature and Right Reason, but it is moreover a Revealed Institution. It is not a mere improvement of Natural Religion (which is the highest Character that some of late seem to give it) but it furnishes us with Laws and Precepts that are far above the highest Flights of Human Wisdom. The Gracious Oeconomy of the Gospel surmounts all common Notices of Mankind, and is the immediate Discovery of God's Will deliver'd to us by Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and who is himself God. All the foregoing Dispensations, were but rude Draughts, and imperfect Models of Religion, in respect of This; for here we have the most sublime Principles and Doctrines, the most Exact and Accurate Rules for the regulating our Lives, the Strongest Proofs and Evidences of a future State, the Surest Conduct to Blessedness, the most Effectual and Powerful Means for attaining it; and here we are acquainted with the Source of all this; namely, The Glorious Undertaking of our Compassionate Saviour and Redeemer, the Lord Jesus. On all which accounts it is plain, that this is one great Instance of the Happiness of a People, that they are United in the Profession of this Holy Institution.

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of Christianity. This is our present Happiness, and we ought to prize and value it as the choicest Blessings, whatever the numerous *Deists* of this Age, and the Rabble of *Scepticks*, and the whole Tribe that sets up for mere *In-differancy in Religion* are pleas'd to think, and to tell the World.

II. We are United in the same *Protestant Religion*, in opposition to *Papery*, and the gross Corruptions, and horrid Enormities of *Rome*. This we are oblig'd to mention as a Privilege of the highest nature, and greatest value; for we are commanded even by a *Voice from Heaven*, to separate from the *Roman Church*, so far as She is Sinful and Idolatrous, *Rev. xviii 4. Come out of her my People, that ye be not partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues.* We cannot be safe, either in respect of Sin or Punishment, unless we bid *Adieu* to the *Spiritual Babylon*. For however some have of late attempted to palm *Papery* upon us by mis-representing it, and very plausibly disguising the Nature of it, yet it is certain, That it professes those Principles and Doctrines which stifle Christianity, and the Life of Religion, and the Simplicity of the *Gospel*; and it is the general Rendezvouz of all Vices and ill Actions. We know the *Papists* make great pretences to Truth, but there are no Topicks that they make use of to that end, whiclh we cannot with greater Reason manage on our side. Do they quote the *Fathers*? So do We, but with more Honesty and Integrity. Are they for the *Councils* and *Decrees*? We are not averse to these neither; but we reckon not Pack'd Assemblies and Conventicles for Authentick Councils. Are they for *Antiquity*? So are We, and much more; for we go as high as *Christ* and the *Apostles*. We refuse no Touch-stone of Truth, we appeal to all Testimonies that make for it. But herein we surpass the *Romanists*, that we appeal to the plain Evidence of Scripture, which they dare not do; yea, they professedly run counter to it. Thus, when they assert the *Sacrifice of the Mass*, when they maintain *Transubstantiation*; when they deny the *Cup in the Lord's Supper* to the People, when they uphold *Praying for the Dead*, when they vindicate the lawfulness of *Praying in an Unknown Tongue*, when they forbid the *Reading of the Scriptures to the People*, when they prefer their *Traditions* to thole Inspired Writings, when they hold that *Divine Worship* may be given to a *Creature*, as the *Virgin Mary*, and other *Saints*; yea, even to *Images*; when they peremptorily affirm the Doctrines *Purgatory* and *Indulgences*; when they stily deny, that it is lawful for *Clergy-men* to enter into the State of *Matrimony*: In all these, they most evidently oppose the *Scriptures*. There is much more to be said to raise our Detestation of *Papery*, but this shall suffice at present; and it may be serviceable to convince us, that it is a great and unspeakable Happiness which we now recount, That the *Church of England*, and that of *Scotland* perfectly agree in Renouncing the *Papish Religion*, and Retaining that which our Blessed

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*Reformers* (stirr'd up by the special Influence of Heaven) instructed us in And let us joyn more and more in our hearty Abhorrence of the *Roman Impostures* and *Cruelties*, and Endeavour to shew our selves as Warm and Zealous against *Popery*, as the *Roman Catholicks* are against the *Protestant Religion*, and the Propagation of it. We are the more concern'd in this, because we are told by a good Hand \* The Reformation is not only at a stand, but is going back, and grows sensibly weaker and weaker. If you suspect this Truth, your Eyes, your Ears may give you satisfaction, by reading and hearing the Relations which have been published of late. Let us therefore understand our true Interest, and let us get as many as we can on our Side, for there will be occasion for them, seeing the numbers of the others are so great.

III: We are more particularly United in those Reform'd Doctrines which are opposed to *Pelagianism* and *Arminianism*. And Impartial Men may discern the Sense of the Church of *England* in these Points, by looking into her *Articles* and *Homilies*, and into the Writings of the *Old Conformists* and *Episcopal Clergy*, who perfectly agreed with the *Puritans* in their Doctrines. They esteem'd these as Christian Verities belonging to the very Foundation. They held them to be the great Ramparts and Bulwarks of Christianity. And herein they were back'd by the *Church of Scotland*, which unanimously profess'd these Doctrines, and held them to be the Test and Barriers of the *Protestant Religion*. Thus the Church (I had almost call'd it the *Kirk*) of *England*, and that of our Neighbours were entirely One. The more deplorable therefore it is, to see how the generality of our Clergy are apostatiz'd, they not letting their Clock by the Sun; they neglecting to make the Scriptures their Rule, and consulting Reason in stead of the Bible, and putting the Philosopher in our Saviour's place: They are grown Wiser than the Learned and pious Compilers of our Articles, and than all the former Archibishops and Bishops, and the Universities, and the whole Body of the Clergy, and have thereby unwisely expos'd the Honour of the *Church of England*. To speak plainly, these Men Merit the Title of *Dissenters*, as well as the Non-Conformists; for if we wou'd be Impartial (as I very much aim at it for my own part) we must own, that there are two sorts of *Dissenters* among us: First, those that separate from the *Church of England* in respect of Rites and Ceremonies, chiefly; Secondly, Those that divide from Her in regard of Doctrines and Articles. And 'tis evident, that this latter kind of Separation, is of an higher Nature than the former, because it is matter of Faith. Our *Arminian Clergy* then are *Dissenters*, properly so call'd; and 'tis manifest, that they cannot fairly and honestly fasten the Name of *Dissenters* upon the *Non-Conformists* (as they do) unless at the same time

\* *By Mr. Duran's Pastoral Care.*

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they suffer these to call them by the same Title. For they both Dissent from the Church of England, the latter from its Ceremonies, the former from some of its Doctrines. Those that they commonly call *Dissenters*, allow not of the use of a Cope or Surplice; and these Men allow not of the Doctrine of Man's Original Impotency and Inability, as to Spiritual Good. The Non-Conformists approve not of the Sign of the Cross; and these Men dislike what our Articles and Homilies say of the Eternal Election. The former condemn the Bowing at the Name of Jesus; and the latter reject what is held by our Church concerning God's Discriminating Grace. The one conform not to the Gesture of Kneeling at the Sacrament; the other cast off the Apostolical Doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, as it is understood by our Church, and all Reformed ones. Now, I say, if one be a *Dissenter*, the other is so too; and therefore let us not be Partial in distributing that Title. I cannot but blame my Brethren for not being concern'd for the *Doctrine* of our Church, as much as they are for the *Offices* and *Rights* of it. If a Writer sends out a Book into the World that touches these latter, we see they are presently up in Arms against him; the Pulpit and the Press sweat to Confute what he saith, tho' tis no more than what *Eraetus*, *Selden*, and their admir'd Friend *Grotius* had said before, and what a dozen other Pen-Men had told the World. But these Men I'm speaking of, dare not stand up in Defence of some of the Principal *Articles* of our Church; yea, they tamely suffer others to expole them, and do so themselves, and are not affirmed of their Revolt and Apostacy.

But we hope, that by the Concurrence of our Brethren in Scotland, who are now One with Us, the number and strength of these that profess the the Sound Doctrine of our Church will be augmented. Yea, there is some prospect of the thriving of these Doctrines, seeing not only our Neighbours in the North, but those in the East are cordial Assertors of them, and stand firm and unshaken in the Profession of them. By saying this, I know I have now exasperated some Persons to a high degree. I mean, those that are wont to mention the *Dutch Divinity* with scorn and contempt, tho' (by the bye) you shall not hear them talk against the *French Theology*. For my part, I think it may be spoken to the honour of our Eastern Neighbours (whatever other Indulgence they give) to keep up these Doctrines in their own Churches and Congregations. And in time, it may be expected that the *Belgick* and *Caledonian Divines*, together with those at home, will be serviceable to influence on our *Arminian Clergy*, and be helpful to re-establish those abdicated Truths among us, and to give a free Vent to the *Calvinian Doctrines*, which have been stifled so long a time; and to extirpate *Arminianism*, which at this Day is the plague of Christianity, and that *Destruction* which wasteth at Noon-day. To conclude this Head, what the Issue and Event of the present

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sent Union will be, is not known to us (for the best Designs are frequently frustrated;) but I have endeavour'd to shew, what good Use may be made of it, and by what Means this Important Transaction may prove Beneficial to us: And this will in some part recompence Her Majesty's Indefatigable Care to promote and finish this Work.

IV. We are United in the same *Happy Government*, with the *Succession in the Protestant Line*. Which is another Blessing to be taken notice of, at present; for so now the Text is verify'd; *One King is King to us all*. And certainly, it is of mighty Importance, to have a Prince of our own Religion, and one that will heartily espouse the Prosperity of it. We read how upon the Division of the *Hebrew Government* into the Kingdoms of *Israel* and *Judah*, Religion visibly decay'd, the Church was corrupted, and Idolatry got ground. And we may observe all along, that such as the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah* were, such was the publick Worship; it always vary'd according to their Will and Pleasure: So necessary is a Good and Pious Ruler for the support of Religion. On which account, we ought to be extremely sensible of our present Felicity, in being blest'd with a Sovereign, whose Heart is so religiously dispos'd, and in whom all the Virtues and Excellencies of her Royal Predecessors are consummated, and in whom all their Faults and Errors are corrected, and perfectly redress'd: A QUEEN, who is the Glory of all the Crowned Heads upon Earth.

And our Happiness is further increas'd by the settling of the *Succession*; in future Ages also, in a *Protestant Family*. For we are all sensible that the Entail in the *direct Line* was lately cut off by the Prince himself; because, when a King subverts, or plainly designs and endeavours to subvert, the Government and Religion, and to destroy the People and the Laws, he is no longer King. The Reason is, because a King is a Ruler by Law; but he that overthrows the Laws, overthrows the Kingly Power. \* Such attempts include a disclaiming the governing us as Subjects, and consequently of being our Prince and King. *Bracton* and *Fortescue*, and other great Sages of the Law, have abundant Passages to this purpose; That a King hath no authority to destroy his People, That he is subject to the Law, That he is no longer King than he Governs by Law. From which Maxims it necessarily follows, that when a Prince breaks the Laws, he Deposes himself; when he subverts the Fundamental Constitutions, he plucks the Crown from his Head with his own Hands. This was our late Case; and this is the foundation of the *Act of Limitation of the Crown*, and Setling it on the House of *Hanover*: For the Estates of our Kingdom rightly suppos'd, that a *Popish Prince* would endeavour to destroy the Religion and Laws of a *Pro-*

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\* Falkner, Book I, Chap. 5. Sect. 2. Numb. 19.

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testant Kingdom, and therefore was not fit to Rule over them. And for my own part, I take it for granted, that he that is for a Popish King is for Popery or is a Well-willer to it, let him talk what he pleases to the contrary.

Besides, as to the late altering the Hereditary Succession, no Wise Man can wonder at it, when he finds that among the *Jewish Kings* recorded in the Holy Scriptures, the Lineal Succession was not always observ'd, and yet approv'd of by God. And in our own Nation, we know that none of the three first Kings after *William the Conqueror* were of the Right Line. It was not thought necessary that the next immediate Heir should succeed. The altering and limiting the Succession was declared to be Law, by an Act of Parliament in the Thirteenth of Queen *Elizabeth's Reign*; and at the same time it was made High Treason to say, That the Succession of the Crown cou'd not be alter'd by Act of Parliament. It appears therefore, that our late Senators acted not without a Precedent; and now by the Union of *England* and *Scotland*, this Succession is further Establish'd, and made Immovable: And hereby our United Strength will become more effectual, and be a very mortifying Stroke to our Adversaries; and the Fears and Troubles which the *South* hath caus'd, will be allay'd by the *North*.

V. We are United in the same *Commerce* and *Traffick*; we are join'd in our *Civil Privileges* and *Immunities*: Which is a farther Strengthening of us, and securing our Welfare. It is here as it is in an *Arch*, wherein every single Stone is secured by the entireness of the whole Fabrick, of which it is a part. Our personal Safety is wrapt up in the Well-being of the Community; as, on the contrary, our Happiness, as we are single Members, is endanger'd, if the Common Interest miscarry. This makes the Prosperity of the Civil State to be our mutual Concern and Care. Besides that, we have that within us which enforces this Duty; for even Nature hath made us sociable Creatures, and we are not born for our selves wholly, but we are to maintain as it were a common Bank, and to promote the Advantage of the Publick. It is often inculcated by the Royal Philosopher, That *the World is one common City*, and thence he argues for mutual Society, Communion and Converse; for Fellow-Citizens must mind the publick Good and Traffick. We were made, saith he, for mutual Converse and Assistance of one another. And to this purpose he hath this excellent Notion, That all Rational Creatures are a kin to one another; and this near Relation instructs them in the Laws of Society and Communion, and inspires them with a publick Spirit. This Noble Principle we meet with in the Constitutions of the Ancient *Romans*, for it was a Law of the *Twelve Tables*, That in all they did, \*they were to bring Glory to their Country. Let the Renown'd *Roman Orator* and Lawyer speak all in these few words,

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\* *Populi sui gloriam augento. Cis. de Leg. Lib. 3.*

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There must (saith he) be one common Design to All; that the Advantages of every single Person; and of the whole may be the same; which Advantage, if every one endeavours to engross to himself, Humane Society will soon be dissolv'd, and come to nothing. All private Conveniences must stoop to the common Good, must yield to the publick Necessity. The contrary to which is that Contracted and narrow Spirit which the Apostles speaks of, *Men shall be lovers of their own Selves;* which he makes part of the Character of the *last Days*, and consequently of ours, which so greedily suck in that pernicious Principle, which the Corrupt Discourse of Men hath almost moulded into a Proverb, *Every Man for himself.* Which if it be meant exclusively, so as wholly to shut out others from our Care and Concern, is a most Churlish and Inhumane Maxim; and he that acts by it can never be serviceable to the Community. For sometimes the publick Weal cannot be preserv'd without Damage to our own private Affairs and Interests. A Part must be lost to secure the Whole, and personal Hazards must be dispens'd with for maintaining the Common Benefit.

This shews how reasonable it is, that we shou'd study the Welfare of the Community, and especially now when it is enlarg'd, and two Nations are incorporated into One. It ought to be urged by us on our Thoughts, that we are all embark'd in the same Vessel, so that if it suffer Shipwreck, the Ruine will be Common. Wherefore it concerns us to be helpful to one another, and jointly to set forward the Publick Interest, and to prefer it to our own private Ends. It was the Opinion of the *Platonists* and *Stoicks*, That there is one Universal and Common Soul of the World that pervades the whole, and actuates every part of it; which is a very agreeable and desireable Notion, if we understand it in the Sense I'm speaking of; There should be as it were but One common Spirit to enliven and influence the whole Community. We should mutually assist one another, and consult the Good of the Publick, and of Posterity, and banish all Selfishness and Narrowness of Spirit. To this purpose we might set before us the Examples of the best sort of Civiliz'd *Heathens*, to teach us *Christians* our Duty in this particuar. What brave Things did the *Decii* and *Curtii*, the *Coelites* and *Serviles* and other Old Romans for their Country! It was \* *Cato's* wish, That he might perish if it would conduce to the Good of the World, especially of his Countrymen. That was a Gallant Man who (as *Plutarch* tells us) being to take a dangerous Voyage for the Service

\* Unum. debet esse omnibus propositum, ut eadem sit utilitas uniuscujusque & universorum: quam si ad se quisque rapiat, dissolvetur omnis humana coniunctio. Idem de Offic. l. 3.

\* Quidam Coelique Deis Erebique liceret,

" Hoc caput in cunctas damnatum exponere terras! Lucan.

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of his Country, and was at the same time dissuaded from it by some Persons who represented to him the great Hazard of that Expedition, made this Reply to them ; *It is necessary that I take this Voyage, but it is not necessary for me to live* : As much as to say, that his Duty was indispensable, but his private Ease and safety, yea, his Life, was not so. He was absolutely oblig'd to act well and worthily, but he was not to be solicitous what the Issue of it would be. I hope this Union of both Nations will discover to the World, that there are many such great Souls among us, who will be ready to postpone their private Conveniences to the prosperity of the publick.

Besides all this that I have already said, there is much more to be expected in this National Incorporation, than we at present see. For,

First, It is a happy Presage and Fore-runner of that Union of Minds and Hearts, and that Undistinguish'd Affection and Good will which all Parties shall bear to one another. It is our Interest to comprehend those in our Friendship, who are equally a Support to the Government with our selves, and to whose Prayers as well as Purses, the Nation hath been beholding in these late Times of publick Danger. Why shou'd we shew our selves Envious and Ill-natur'd? Is it not fit and congruous that they should share with us in the Winning, who ventur'd so generously, and had so much at Stake? Indulgence, which before was free, is now a point of Gratitude : and it will always be most Safe. It is my Persuasion, That nothing will be more Destructive to our Excellent Church, than that excessive Height to which some would screw it up. It hath fallen once by these Methods, and it may do so again; but I heartily offer my Advice to prevent it, that is, in one Word, Let us be Moderate. I verily believe, that there can never happen so great Inconveniency and Mischief to our Church by Dissenting-Meetings, as by Rigid and Violent Impositions. It hath been the Opinion of some of our Church-men, That to maintain the Unity of the Church, every thing must give way, the Scriptures themselves. *The Unity of the Church, faith \* Mr. Thorndike, is the Sovereign Law, to which all other Laws, tho' never so much Enacted by the Apostles, never so evidently couch'd in the Scriptures, are necessarily subordinate.* A very strange Passage! But it expresses the Sense of too many among us. And so doesthat of another of our Divines, + *It is better, saith he, to Indulge Mens Vices and Debaucheries than their Consciencies.* A wretched saying! But too much in vogue with them that prefer Ceremony to Substantial Religion and Godliness. But it is high time to learn Sobriety, and to be sensible of the infinite Mischief that hath lurk'd under the pretence of advancing the Unity of the Church. We see that God hath wonderfully bless'd Her Majesty for her Great and Signal

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\* Epilog. Book 3. Cap. 31. p. 378. † Parker's Ecclesiast. Polity.

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Moderation and Temper. And now after all our Victories, it remains that we conquer our selves, and lay aside our former Antipathies, and bear with one another, and entirely Agree in Brotherly-love and Affection. Seeing by the Divine Providence we are kept from being Destroy'd by others, why should we destroy our selves, and pull down our Ruin with our own Hands? Our Persecuting Days are over, it is hop'd: People will not have Unnecessary things thrust upon them. When we sent *Scotland* a *Liturgy*, they return'd it with a *Covenant*. Let not us who are of the Communion of the Church of *England*, and conform to its *Liturgy* and *Rites*, judge and condemn our weak Brethren, and striye to bar them of their Liberty. It is Generous, Brave and Great to suffer Usages different from our own, and not to stand upon nice Modes and Punctilios. If we view the Christian Churches Abroad, we shall not find them of one entire piece; their Religious Rites and Customs vary. If we wou'd consider this, it will cool our immoderate Heats, and sweeten our Tempers; and tho' we have different Gestures and circumstantial Observances; yet the same Catholick Charity would inspire our Breasts.

Secondly, By our Union with *Scotland*, we shall learn *Strictness of Discipline*, the want of which, our Church and Church-men have complain'd of a long time. It is not to be doubted, that open Offenders are to be Admonish'd and Censur'd in an Ecclesiastical way; for this is according to our Saviour's Institution, *Tell it unto the Church*, Matth. xviii. 17. And upon the Offender's refusing to attend to the publick Admonishment, he further Ordains after this manner, *Let them be unto thee as a Heathen Man, and a Publican*; that is, He is to be cast out of the Publick Assembly, and we must hold no Communion with him. Both these parts of Discipline, namely Admonition and Excommunication, are frequently mention'd and authoriz'd in the Apostolical Writings, as any Man that hath read them must be forc'd to acknowledge. Scandalous Sinners were ejected out of the Church, and upon Repentance they were receiv'd into Her Bosom again, which latter Act is called *Loosing*, Matth. xviii. 18; and *Forgiving*, and *Comforting*, 2 Cor. ii. 7. And this was the usual Practice of the Christian Churches, which succeeded the Apostles, as *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, and others testify. Lately there have been some who have look'd upon this, as a mere Civil and Secular Punishment; and they have thought that the Christian Churches have no Power to inflict it. And this is maintain'd by \* a late Writer, who tho' he hath some bold Truths, and such Reflections, as some of our Church-men may blush at; yet he hath without Reason, and against Scripture, attempted to null the Power and Authority of the Churches of

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\* Author of the *Rights of the Christian Church*.

Christ,

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Christ, as to Excommunication, and to make void that Distinction which Christ and his Apostles have settled, between the peculiar Society and Corporation of the Christian Church, and that of other Bodies and Societies of Men. And I conceive, that the Reason and Necessity of the thing, as well as the Institution of Christ and his Apostles, sufficiently authorise this Practice; for it is reasonable and necessary, that scandalous Offenders should be openly Check'd, that thereby the Honour of God, and of Religion, may be maintain'd; and it is likewise requisite, that the Congregations of Christians should be purg'd of their Corrupt Members, lest they infect others. Now, in the exerting of this Discipline, we shall be encourag'd by the *Kirk of Scotland*; for none are more Exact and Impartial than they in Censuring and Punishing the Scandalous, and none are more Remiss and Partial than we. We have often thunder'd out the Church's *Anathema's* against a poor Dissenting Brother, for not frequenting his Parish-Church, when the most flagrant Drunkards and Swearers in the Parish, have gone untouched; yea, sometimes have been taken to the Holy Table. On other Accounts, this Ecclesiastical Penalty hath been miserably abus'd and perverted, and hath prov'd a very scandalous Administration; for tho' we have not Excommunicated Rats and Mice (as we are told some of another Church hath done) yet we have discharg'd this dreadful Thunder of the Church with great Passion and Fury, for slight and petty Matters. But by the Power and Virtue of this *Happy Union*, I hope, the ancient Discipline of the Christian Churches will be restor'd among us, and executed with that Reverence and Solemnity which becomes it, and so will be of great Service to the Christian Religion.

Thirdly, We shall be encourag'd not only to Strictness of Discipline, but of Life, (which indeed follows the other) by the Example of our Brethren, with whom we are now United. One of that Nation, and a profess'd Admirer of the *Church of England* (as what he hath written testifies to the World,) assures us, That <sup>a</sup> the numerous Professors of the Reform'd Religion in that Country, who vary from one another in some Opinions, are very sincere in their Principles, and do generally practise conformably to their Professions: No Christian Society in the World doth excel them for their exact Observation of the Sabbath-Day. And truly we may observe it, that these two go together, a strict keeping the Lord's-Day, and a general course of Piety thro' Mens whole Lives; as on the contrary, those that break this Commandment break all the rest. Since that Notion hath prevail'd, That <sup>b</sup> the Lord's

<sup>a</sup> Mr. Patr. Gordon in his *Geography Anatomiz'd*.

<sup>b</sup> Heylin's *Hist. of A. Bp. Laud's Life*, p. 15.

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*Day is built upon the same Foundation with the other Holy Days.* We cannot but take Notice of, and lament the excessive Liberty which most People have indulg'd themselves in on this day. They are so far from taking care, that they and their Families be employ'd wholly in the Worship of God, either in publick or private at this time, that they have no regard to the Duties of this Season, but spend the Day in Secular business, or in Idleness, or even in downright Profaneness. We do not herein tread in the Steps of our Ancestors, the converted *Saxons*, who were remarkable for the contrary Practice: They dedicated this day entirely to Religious Offices; and if any one neglected to do so, he was either Fin'd, or corporally Punish'd. And now the Practice of our *Neighbours* is worth our imitation, they are solemn Observers of this Holiday, and that hath an influence on their whole Lives: They are *Serious* in their Religion (which is a rare thing in this Age) they shew Zeal for it, and act according to it. They frequent their publick Assemblies with great Assiduity and Devotion; they are dutiful to their Pastors, and keep up Charity and Fraternal Communion with one another. They are very exact and strict in the Education of their Children, and season their early Years with Virtue and Religion. They have with the Patience of *Confessors* and *Martyrs* (and such a great number of them were) born the Sufferings which the High-Churchmen brought upon them; and now, when they are able to Retaliate, they study not Revenge, but let the World see that they can Forgive as well as Suffer. We stand in need of such Fathers as these, and it will concern us to follow them with great diligence, that thereby a Blessing may be derived upon the whole Community; and that this Conjunction of the two Kingdoms may be prosperous.

For this is certain, that even the *Secular Welfare*, of the Publick depends on *Religion*, and the *Practice* of *Holiness*. A Nation is never safe, that tolerates immoral Practices. If we would exert the best Politicks, the only course we can take is to Reform our Lives. Godliness is the great Prop of Kingdoms; Religion is the best Reason of State. This is the main Securer of our Happiness, and the grand bottom on which all our Interests are wound. Nothing is more true, than that Men of vicious and debauch'd Lives, are the greatest Enemies of the Common-wealth; and the Virtuous and Godly are the best Friends to their Country, and most industriously study the Welfare of it. These are they that *deliver the Island*, Job xxii. 30. and they do it by the *purenels* of their hands, as 'tis there laid; that is, by the Holiness of their Lives, and more particularly by their Hands lifted up to Heaven in Prayer. Whence one of the ancient and religious Fathers of the Christian Church observes, That *there is great need of holy Men, for they save Cities and Regions from impendent danger; they turn away the fierce anger of God and repel its utmost force.* So useful are Righteous Men in the places where they inhabit; they are the greatest Benefactors to their Country, they procure good Days and halcior Times. I hope we shall strive to be publick Examples of Virtue to one another, and thereby derive these Blessings upon us. I hope our antient Virtues of Faith-

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<sup>a</sup> . Vide Council. Britan. & Leges Eadgari,

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fulness, Humility, Charity, Modesty, unaffected Piety will be reviv'd; and our modern upstart Graces and Accomplishment of Pride, Hypocrisy, Uncharitableness, Confidence, Presumption, Neutrality, and Indifference in Religion will be utterly exploded.

Having now finish'd all that I intended to offer on this Solemn Subject, I will conclude with some seasonable *Corollaries* that the Premisses afford us. Let us labour to Increase, to Cultivate and Continue this *Happy Union*, and let us be careful to promote all the forementioned Designs of it, whether as to the *Religious* or the *Civil* part of it, but especially the former, that of the Church and Religion. Here let our utmost Efforts be seen, here let our greatest Vigour be spent. To Excite you to which, I will beg leave to recite a remarkable Passage which *Theodoret* relates in his *Ecclesiastical History*, Lib. 4. cap. 32. A Noble Commander under the Emperor *Valens* having fought bravely, and returning Victorius from *Armenia*, had an offer made him by the Emperor, of Asking what he would. See now the Spirit of a right Christian Man! waving all Wealth and Preferments, which so ravish the Hearts of others, the Petition that he put up was this, that the Orthodox Christians, who had ventur'd their Lives for the true Apostolical Doctrine, might have a Church granted them, (for it seems they then stood in need of one in those Parts) for the publick Exercise of their Religion. *Terentius*, (for that was his Name) was denied this request by that *Arian* Prince, but had still the Liberty to ask any thing but that; which since he was debarr'd from bargaining, he generously refus'd all things else, resolving, that if he could not be heard in God's Cause, he would not be a Suitor in his own. Thus the Love of God and his Church, and the true Faith, ennobles Mens Spirits, and inspires them with Gallantry and Generosity, whereas Self-love debases them, and renders them Grovelling and Mercenary. It was notably said of that Man of God, *Martin Luther*. That he despised the Favour, no less than the Fury of *Rome*. And most Brave and Heroick was that which was heard to fall from his Lips so often, *I had rather perish with Christ, than Reign with Cæsar*; that is, he chose rather to undergo the greatest sufferings, and see the Cause of Christ flourish, than to live in the greatest Pomp and Prosperity, and at the same time to see the Church of Christ trampled upon. It is not worth our while to live, if our Religion dies and perishes; therefore let us be mindful of this in the first place.

But we are to remember, that the Interest of Both, that is, of the Church and State, is our Concern. It was very becoming the large and generous Spirit of that good Man, and Royal Prophet, to pray for the Welfare of *Sion* and of *Jerusalem*, *Psal. li. 18. Sion*, where the Tabernacle and Ark were placed, and therefore it denotes the *Church*; *Jerusalem*, which was the Chief City, and place of Traffick and Busines, and therefore signifies the Civil Community, *Do good in thy good pleasure unto Sion, and build thou the Walls of Jerusalem*, *Psal. li. 18.* Those who are truly Religious, and not Partial in the Discharge of their Duty, are mindful of Both; especially they are concern'd for *Jerusalem*, when the good of *Sion* depends upon it, as for the most part it doth.

For

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For they mutually help one another; and that of another Ecclesiastical Historian proves true, If any one, saith he, will diligently observe, he shall find that at the same time the *Church* and the *Commonwealth* are endanger'd. There is a near Affinity between these two, and therefore the Soundest Politicians and Statesmen have alway had regard to both. The Ancient *Romans*, when they were to treat of Civil Matters of a high Nature, met in the Temples of their Gods. Our *House of Commons* was a Chapel of old: Let it hint this, that our Laws should savour of Religion, and that even our Secular Councils should tend to the Good of the *Church*. Pray we then with great fervency, and sollicite Heaven with uninterrupted Devotion with respect to both these, the Prosperity of the Ecclesiastical and Civil State of these Countries. And with Prayers let us join Endeavours, let us be very Active and Vigorous. Now is the time to attend to our Welfare; now is the critical Sealon. If we are desirous to make sure of it, let us without delays apply ourselves to this Work. For I question not, but the Time is approaching which I spoke of in the Entrance into this Discourse; and neither the *Port* nor *Rome*, neither the *Divan* nor the *Consistory*, shall be able to prevent the effects of it: The World will be moulded anew. A new Scene will open, and you must not be idle Spectators, but Actors in it. The *Universal Harmony* of things which was long since predicted, seems not to be far off. Be Tuning your Instruments, and preparing for it, without waiting the Revolution of *Plato's Great Year*.

Let us bless God this Day, that we have any hopes and foresight that this Glorious Work will be begun in this part of the World by our *Gracious Sovereign*, whom God hath prosper'd in all her Enterprizes, and rais'd up to unite both Kingdoms into One, for great and excellent Purposes. The Mercury rises, there is hopes of clear Weather. We are reserv'd for the best of Ages, tho' this present one, in respect of Infidelity and Immorality, is the worst. But we may observe it all along in the History of the Church, as we find it deliver'd in the Holy Scriptures, that extraordinary Corruptions and Apostasies have been the Forerunners of a Reformation. Universal Disorder and Impiety, have made way for as remarkable a Change. So at this day, the extreme Degeneracy, the prodigious Debauchery of the present Times inclines me to hope, that God will raise up some very Eminent Persons, whom he will enable to undertake and accomplish a perfect Reformation among us, which is the only thing we want. Who knoweth whether the Queen is come to the Kingdom for such a time as this? Who knoweth whether She is the chief Person Appointed by Divine Providence for this great purpose? And therefore we ought to be sensible how Great and Rich a Treasure we have in Her Life.

Vouchsafe, O merciful God, to Crown her with Length of Days, and to make her a signal Instrument of thy Glory, and the good of these Nations; and be pleased to raise up many other Servants devoted to thy Honour, and inspire them with Zeal and Courage to advance the Cause of thy Son *Jesus*, and to promote the Flourishing Estate of these Churches of *England* and *Scotland*: That, if it seem good to thy Divine Wisdom, the Commencement of the Happy *Millennium* may be the Blessing of our Days.

F I N I S.